



Pat 11/11/78

P.O. Box 1567,
JOHANNESBURG.

28th April, 1948.

Sir Alexander Korda,
London Films,
LONDON.

Dear Sir Alexander,

I must thank you for your generous cable, and I think it is time that I gave you some information which might be helpful to you. I am retiring from the Public Service on June 30th, and except for three engagements in July, I shall be completely free thereafter; until then a big institution makes heavy claims on my time and energy. But my wife will be free after May 31st to give any help that may be needed, and could be free before that if it were urgent.

As I see it, there will be two problems to be solved before any film could be made. One would be the matter of the consent, or at least approval, of General Smuts. The other would be the problems of actors, for there is no black theatre in South Africa; this difficulty you have foreseen, Mr. Scribner tells me.

General Smuts has read the book. He borrowed it from Mr. Hofmeyr, our Deputy Prime Minister, and returned it without comment. What he thought, no one knows. I assume, however, that your concern is the story, and not the theses; but of course the story itself is one of conditions about which we are sensitive, and which, although they exist in almost every country, are here to be found in their extreme form. Mr. Hofmeyr has read the book too, and as you would suppose, recognises it to be a true picture; and he has never been afraid to face the truth. I know him well, and he himself writes that he could see no objection to the making of a film, if it were discreetly done. It will no doubt be your brother's task to size up the position, and to decide on the best course to take.

In regard to the actors, this is an unknown field. I expect we shall have to try and try and try again, but my wife and I are willing to do anything that we can, and not to give in easily. I have no doubt there is latent talent somewhere, but I expect it will cost a great deal of energy and persistence to find it. In this you will find us ready and willing.

In any case we will be available at the times I have said, and I only hope that this will fit in with your plans. You may be sure that we are very excited about the whole thing and honoured by your message.

Yours sincerely,